



FIONA STAPLES BRIAN K. VAUGHAN

Saga™

CHAPTER
TWENTY
SIX

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Saga

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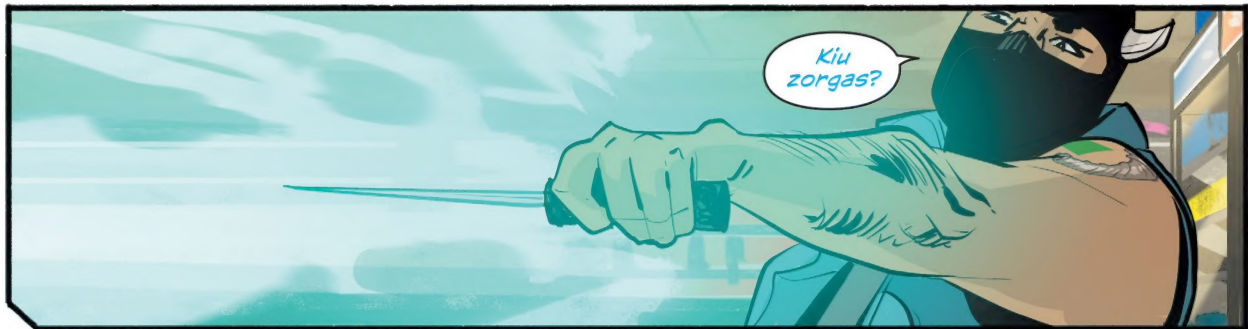
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Marko!

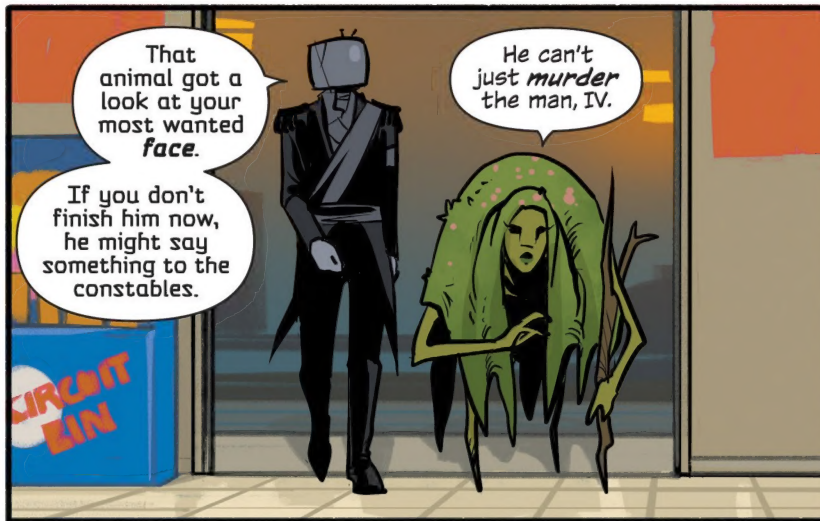


The heck are you doing?



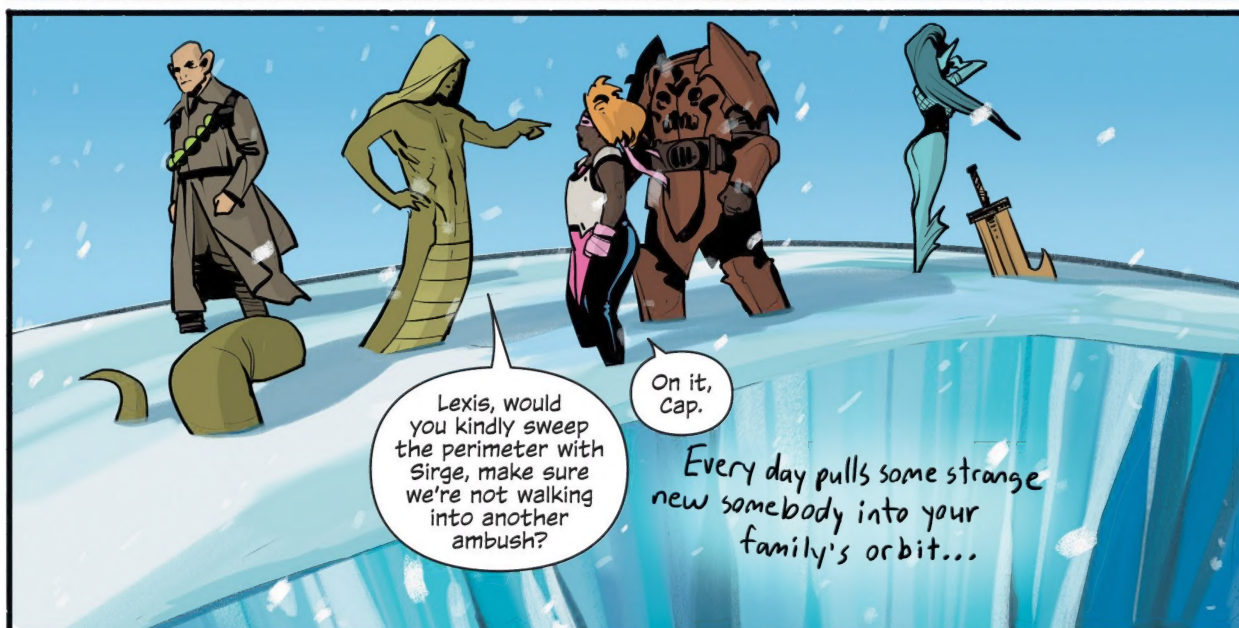
I... I'm not sure.

Well, don't stop.





Mom always said that having a kid means a rapid expansion of your social circle, whether you like it or not.



Lexis, would you kindly sweep the perimeter with Sirge, make sure we're not walking into another ambush?

On it, Cap.

Every day pulls some strange new somebody into your family's orbit...



... and you just hope they end up doing more good than bad.

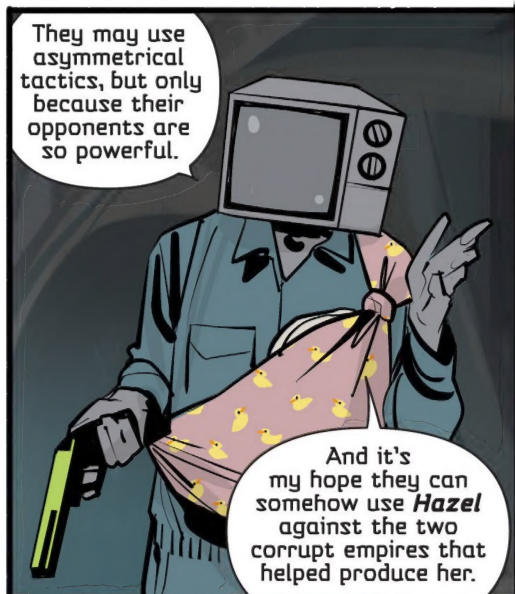
Now we won't be lonely!



You brought **terrorists** to our doorstep?

The Last Revolution **aren't** terrorists.

They're resistance fighters dedicated to ending your war, which has brought nothing but misery to planets like mine.









What do you want me to do, Brand?!

I can't cast lightning at this thing without frying us!



Then use ~~my~~ my brother's belt!

He used to keep ~~my~~ gunpowder in one of the pouches!



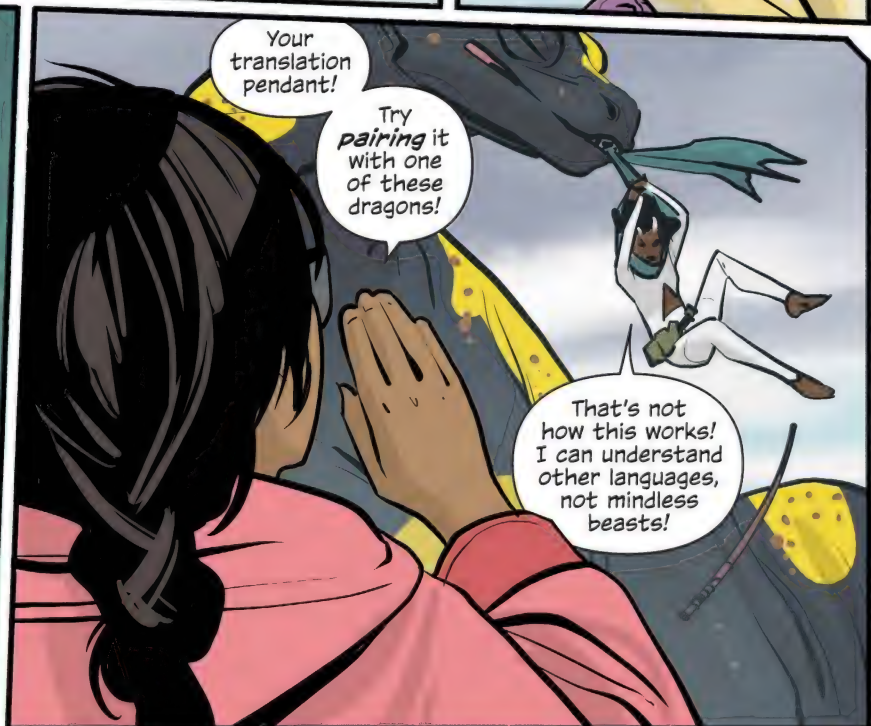
There's nothing in here but condoms and old receipts!

The rest of you, just save yourselves!



Negative, ma'am!

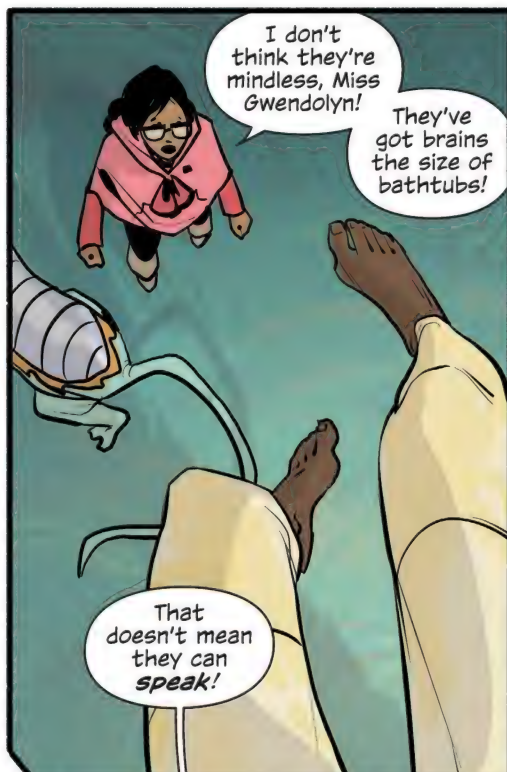
I've got an idea!



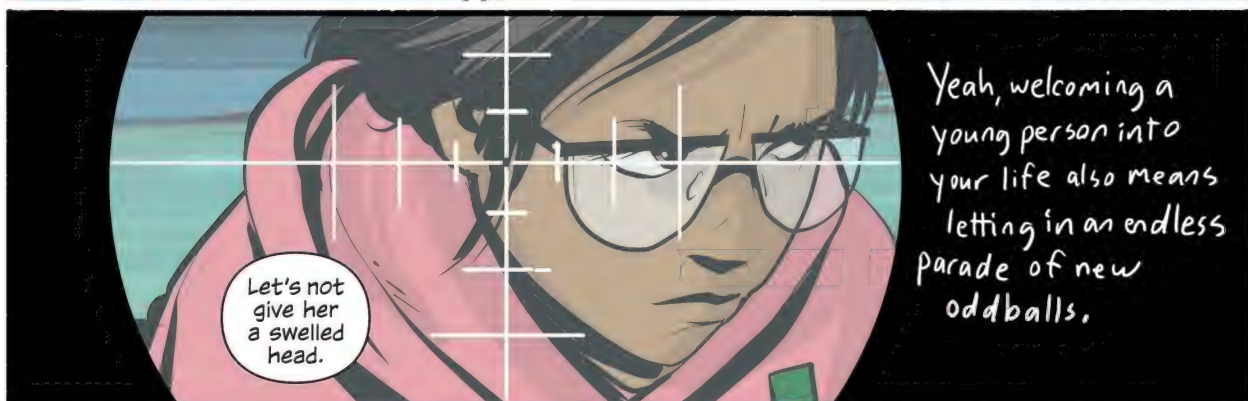
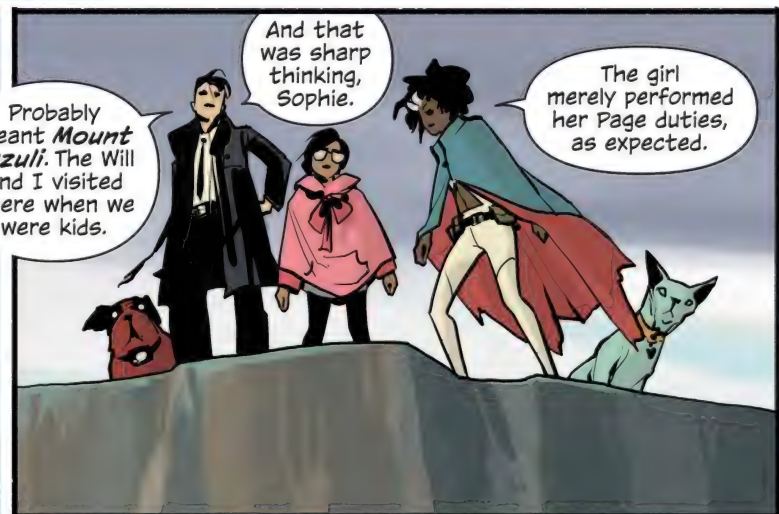
Your translation pendant!

Try *pairing* it with one of these dragons!

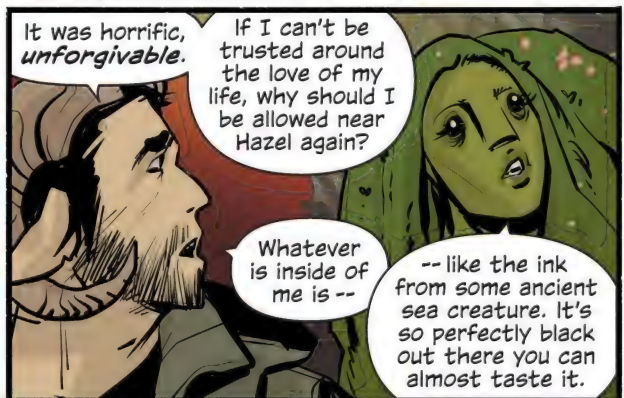
That's not how this works! I can understand other languages, not mindless beasts!













Don't hurt me!

Where the hell did you get more drugs?!



From, from the thief you stopped.

Why would a veteran of the Wreath army be carrying Fadeaway?

Because he's a **veteran**? Honestly, you're probably one of the only vets who's **not** using.



Is that the line you used to push that garbage on Alana?

I swear, I never pushed that girl to do anything.

She leapt with open arms.



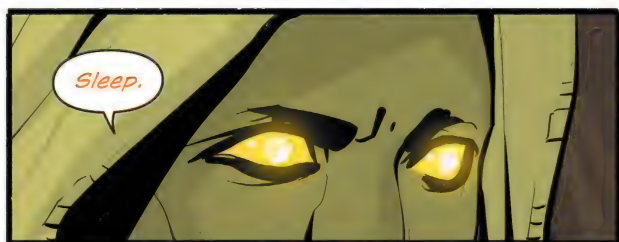
Why?

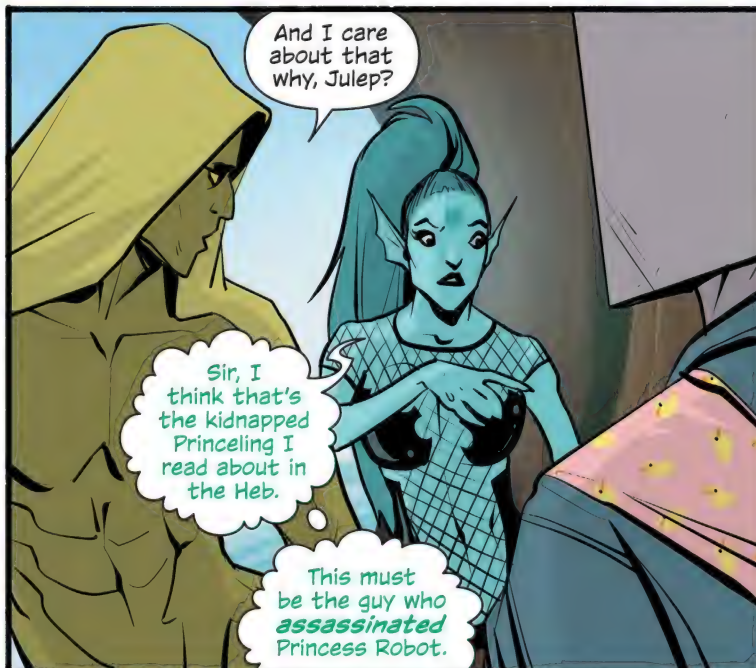
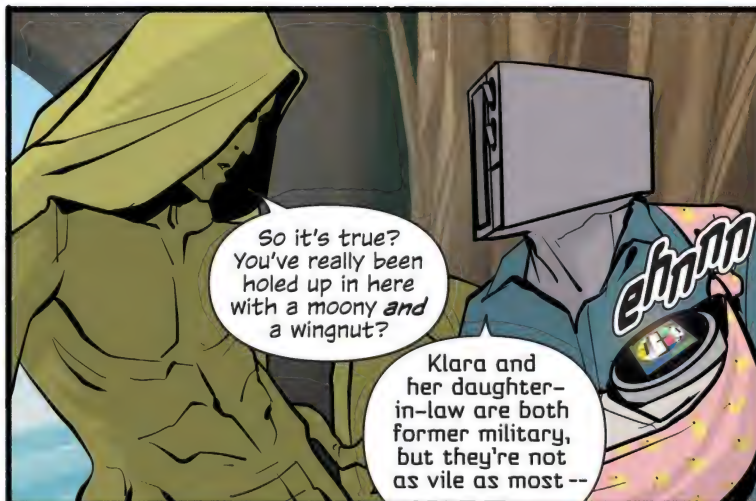
What is it that she wanted to feel so badly...?

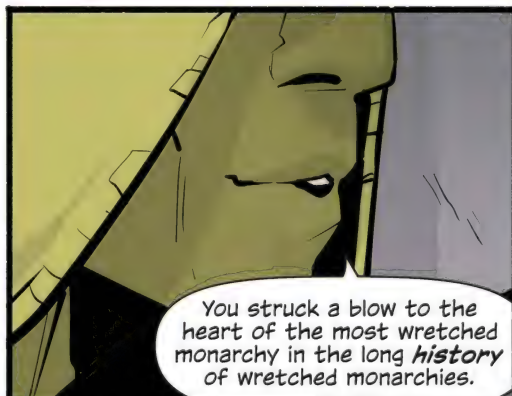


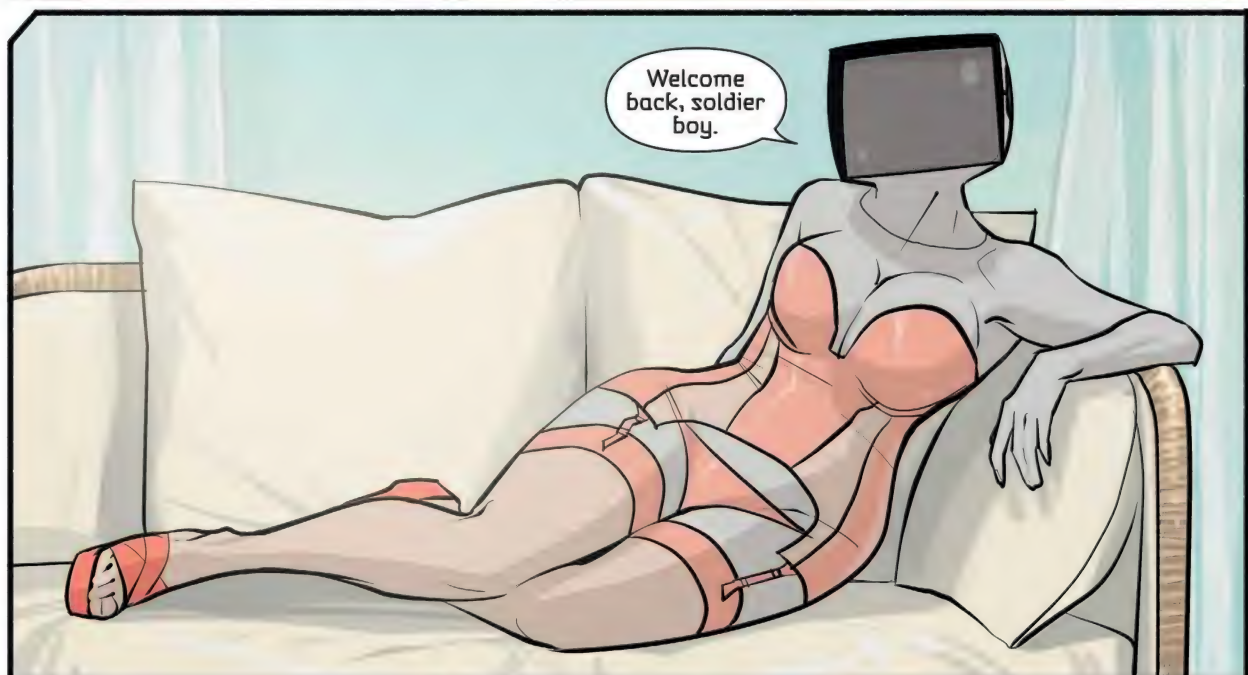
Peace.

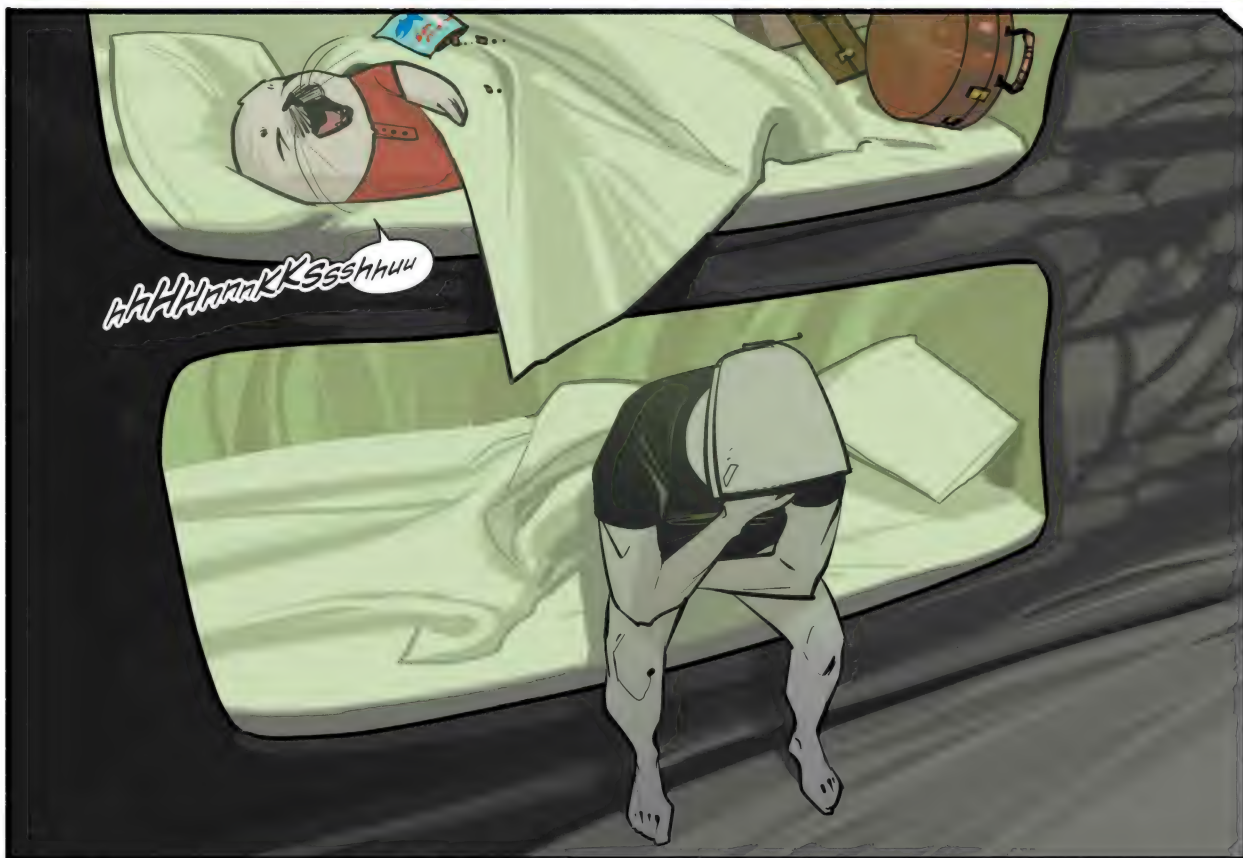














TO BE CONTINUED

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Bonsoir, mes amis.

BKV here, back from the 42nd annual Angoulême Festival in France. I'm so grateful that Image allows its creators to have a voice in choosing their international publishing partners, because not only do our friends at Urban Comics print the most beautifully translated hardcover albums of our work, they also treat their writers and artists like goddamn rock stars.

Fiona and I got to stay in a literal CASTLE with my new pals and fellow Image creators Wes Craig, Sean Murphy, Matteo Scalera, and Scott Snyder, and we were all spoiled enough to wash down our escargot with roughly 600 bottles of wine. Thanks again to everyone at Urban for their unreal generosity.

This has obviously been a traumatic time for French cartoonists and their readers, but the outpouring of love and support that the entire country showed for our medium this year was incredibly moving and inspiring. J'adore les bandes dessinées.

Anyway, while we wait to hear what you guys thought of Chapter Twenty-five, let's dig into the results of the 2014/2015 SAGA READER SURVEY, our semiannual questionnaire that we use to better understand who the hell is reading this comic and what makes them tick.

This year, a record number of you lovely lunatics took the time to lick a stamp and physically mail your completed surveys our way, and over the last few months, I've read and haphazardly organized every single response (mostly while listening to old episodes of *Norm Macdonald Live*).

Here's a bit of what I learned, at least about those of you who are addicted to filling out forms...

2014/2015 SAGA READER SURVEY TOTALLY SCIENTIFICALLY ACCURATE RESULTS

1) Who was President (or your home nation's political equivalent) when you were born?

These were the ten most popular answers, counting down to the most frequently named leader by a considerable margin:

10. George W. Bush ('01 to '09; and you kids are too young to be reading this filth!)
9. Ferdinand Marcos (President of the Philippines, '65 to '86)
8. Eisenhower ('53-'61)
7. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister of Canada from '84 to '93)
6. Ford ('74 to '77)
5. Margaret Thatcher (Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from '79 to '90)
4. Carter ('77 to '81)
3. Clinton ('93 to '01)
2. Bush, Sr. ('89 to '93)
1. Reagan ('81 to '89)

Nixon and LBJ almost squeaked onto the top ten (but I guess JFK's term was too short?), as did Mexico's Miguel de la Madrid, France's François Mitterrand, Australia's Bob Hawke, and the former Soviet Union's Mikhail Gorbachev.

You are a fascinatingly global bunch, but way too many of you are children of the 80s, and you make this late Ford-era relic feel ancient.

2) And if it's not prying, what is your gender identity?

For the first time in our book's history, 50% of you identified as Female, overtaking the 47% who identified as Male. 3% identified more uniquely, with responses including but not limited to: Transwoman, Transman, Non-binary DFAB, Genderless, Genderqueer, Male-But-Female-For-Videogames...

3) Have you ever personally ignited a road flare, and if so, what were the circumstances?

I don't know why, but if you're a North American male, you most likely answered "yes" to this question, but almost always for recreational purposes.

And if you're a North American female, you most likely answered "no," though Adrianna in State College, PA notes that she did once use a flare "in D&D to save my guild from an army of angry orcs."

And if you happen to be outside of North America, you apparently had no clue what the fuck I was talking about, with James C. of Dorset even asking, "Aren't those things illegal in the U.K.?"

Is that true? If so, we have to do something about the American patriarchy's apparent stranglehold on this cinematically awesome life experience.

4) What was the first comic book that got you hooked on this medium?

Many of you were nice and or ass-kissing enough to mention this title, but other popular answers were *Sandman*, *The Walking Dead*, *2000AD*, *Bone*, *Scott Pilgrim*, *G.I. Joe*, *Watchmen*, Jim Lee and Chris Claremont's *X-Men #1*, *The Death Of Superman*, and most surprisingly to me, *Sonic The Hedgehog*.

5) Approximately how many countries have you visited in your life?

While some of you did confess that you haven't been able to leave your own country even once yet, we're still a pretty well-traveled group, with a majority of you having visited at least four different nations (Iraq and Afghanistan were two

frequently mentioned destinations), and lots of you were well into the double digits, including Louisa T. from San Gabriel, CA, who I believe was the leader with a very impressive 35.

6) Sexting: hot or absurd?

Most common answer was "absurd," followed by "it's both," followed by "it depends," followed by "hot," followed by endless other responses, including G.B. from Atlanta, who wrote, "Great, if I didn't have to worry about events such as those in *THE PRIVATE EYE* and the possibility of my information being leaked."

Thanks for the gratuitous *PanelSyndicate.com* plug, G.B.

7) Where do you fall in the birth order? Oldest, youngest, middle? Or no siblings at all, you unfairly stigmatized only child?

A surprising easy win for eldest children, followed by youngest, then only children, with poor middle children like yours truly coming in last.

8) What was the last great novel (without illustrations) that you read?

You are an exceptionally well-read troop, but since there were almost no repeat mentions, let me take this opportunity to plug Adam Resnick's not technically a novel/collection of biographical short stories *Will Not Attend*, a book that made me laugh so hard that it frightened my children.

9) How much would you say that you support Israel's actions in Gaza on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 10 (completely)?

The most popular answer was "1," the second most popular answer was "9," and the third most popular answer was some variation of "I don't really follow current events so I can't say."

Rather than letting that last one depress us, I thought I'd recommend a few highly entertaining graphic novels—each of which I'd recommend to anyone who digs *SAGA*—that also happened to help me learn more about the Middle East:

Exit Wounds by Rutu Modan

Palestine by Joe Sacco

Not The Israel My Parents Promised Me by Harvey Pekar and J.T. Waldman

War Stories: Children Of Israel by Garth Ennis and Tomas Aira

These books offer some different perspectives on the region's past, present and future, but obviously not EVERY perspective, so I'd encourage readers to please send in other recommendations instead of yelling at me about any seemingly biased omissions.

10) What are your ideal movie theater snacks?

Amazingly, 100% of you answered this correctly: Peanut M&Ms dumped into Arclight buttered popcorn, served with a smuggled-into-the-theater flask of warm gin.

11) Do you think your parents are proud of you?

Almost every single one of you said "yes" to this, though many sounded taken aback by this realization, including C.M. in Australia, who wrote, "Conservative Catholic, Filipino parents proud of their gay, liberal son? Surprisingly, yes."

12) Have you ever gone hunting?

But almost every single one of you said "no" to this, except for the occasional wag like Kaitlyn W. in Mission Viejo, CA who wrote, "I often have to hunt for rare Asian delicacies such as red bean buns and other super kawaii treats."

Seriously, are there no hunters in this audience? If you're one, please let us know. We promise not to judge.

13) What is your kryptonite?

"Cute, funny, nerdy guys," said Cheryl A. from New Albany, IN.

"Feminist boys who love Marvel," echoed Madison G. of Austin, TX.

"Men wearing rumpled white dress shirts and speaking with British accents," added Caroline P. of Richmond, VA.

"I have no kryptonite. I'm more like Wonder Woman," retorted Alice P. of Wausau, WI.

14) If you were on Celebrity Jeopardy, which charity would you be playing for?

You are a very giving lot, and there were a near infinite variety of different charities listed, but Doctors Without Borders was a clear and worthy frontrunner.

15) What is the worst thing you've ever been called?

Yikes, sorry about this one. These answers were almost always incredibly depressing, especially this one from Chris F. in Baton Rouge, who simply said, "I don't want to talk about it."

16) Favorite Saturday morning cartoon when you were a kid?

The frontrunner by a long chalk was *X-Men: The Animated Series*. As others have theorized in the past, that show clearly introduced more people of your generation (regardless of sex) to comics and comic-book characters than just about any source material from any other medium.

17) What is the most embarrassing thing about your current browser history?

Lots of hilarious responses to this one, but surprisingly, porn-y stuff (including super-embarrassing erotic fanfic) came in second. The first place answer actually involved obsessively stalking the social media of exes, you poor creeps. The third most cited response involved having to check Google to find out the answer to Question #1 of this very survey.

18) If you were trapped on a desert island, what one video game would you want with you?

Lots of votes for old-school Super Mario, *Galaga* or some version of *The Sims*. I can't believe none of you answered iPad Scrabble, which was definitely my response to Question #13.

19) When was the last time you needed to be brave?

Spencer G. from Virginia Beach confessed, "Asking a guy out on a date. He said yes! But then I started talking about SAGA..."

Uh-oh, that answer took a mysteriously ominous turn.

20) How many tattoos do you have?

If this sampling of readers is to be believed, more of you have ink than don't. Saffraz S. from Gainesville, FL even sent pictures of his seven "comic-related and extremely geeky" tats... but what gives with none of them being SAGA characters, Saffraz?!

A special prize goes to the first person out there to send in his or her tattoo of Ghüs. Come on, you know you want one...

21) Have you ever seen someone die with your own eyes?

Lots of harrowing responses to this one, especially from our veterans, but I was fascinated by this response from Michael H. of Brooklyn, who wrote, "Watched my grandma die. Stood with her and made eye contact so she wouldn't be alone. Also saw a stranger get decapitated by the C train."

Holy Christ, Michael. Sorry for your loss, but talk about burying the lede...

22) What is the last music you actually paid for?

I was impressed by how many of you still shell out for music, including A.L. from San Francisco, who just bought Karen O's excellent *Crush Songs* on vinyl. The *Guardians of the Galaxy* soundtrack was the most frequently mentioned paid download. Lots of concertgoers out there, too.

23) How many alcoholic beverages do you normally consume in a week? Truthfully?

Wow, a stunning amount of you are teetotalers, either because you're underage, some form of "straight edge," have alcoholism in your family, or simply don't like the stuff. Good for you, he types, while continuing to nurse his flask of gin.

24) Do you think college is important?

Most of you agreed with Tiolina P. of Austin, who wrote, "In order to be an informed, interesting person who contributes

meaningfully to society? No. To get a good job? Often. To be qualified for some small number of careers? Yes."

25) What do you hope your legacy will be?

All of these answers were beautiful and life-affirming, but it's late and I'm covered in paper cuts and envelope glue, so I'll just single out Michael L. from Woodstock, GA, since his response was probably closest to my own: "I hope my children will remember their childhoods with happiness, and strive to give their children the same."

As promised, everyone who was brave enough to rip their worthless questionnaire pages out of the back of their precious comic books would be automatically entered in a contest to win a signed SAGA script, and this one is my full script to Fiona for Chapter Twenty-five, which we don't plan to ever reprint anywhere else.

So without further ado, let's turn it over to our resident Barker's Beauty, my somewhat likable dachshund Hamburger K. Vaughan, as he digs deep into the mail mountain to randomly select a winner...



After confusedly hunting for Muenster cheese in this pile all morning, Hamburger finally emerged with an envelope from one Tobey Danielle Conner of Grand Rapids, MI, who noted on her survey how bad she felt about tearing out a page. Sorry to force you into vandalizing your own property, Tobey, but at least you got some swag out of it.

Congratulations, and thanks again to everyone who took the time and postage to share your darkest secrets with us. You are loved.

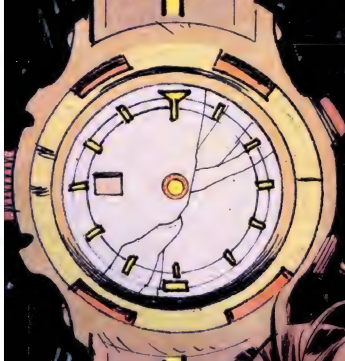
That's all for now, but next month, it's our take on a "bottle episode," and we're particularly proud of this chapter, so let's meet back here in thirty, cool?

Really needs to invest in a proper letter opener,
Brian



MILLAR MURPHY CHRONONAUTS

MARCH 2015



IT'S ABOUT TIME



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little robot.

big universe.

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BECKY CLOONAN

ANDY BELANGER

SOUTHERN CROSS

FOR HERE THERE IS NOTHING,
ONLY NIGHT.

MARCH 2015



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